

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 NSC-05 PM-03 L-02 EB-07 PRS-01

CIAE-00 INR-05 NSAE-00 RSC-01 SAJ-01 SP-02 XMB-02

TRSE-00 CIEP-01 OMB-01 DODE-00 COME-00 FAA-00 DOTE-00

PA-01 USIA-06 FEAE-00 SIL-01 LAB-04 /071 W

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R 131423Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0159

INFO AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, DA, SW, XZ

SUBJECT: SWEDISH PRIME MINISTER VISITS COPENHAGEN

REF: COPENHAGEN 3470 AND 3468

SUMMARY: IN A FOUR HOUR VISIT TO COPENHAGEN DECEMBER 6 SWEDISH PRIME MINISTER PALME MET WITH PRIME MINISTER HARTLING AND WITH FORMER PRIME MINISTER ANKER JORGENSEN, LEADER OF THE DANISH SOCIAL DEMOCRATS. THE PURPOSE OF THE TALK WITH HARTLING WAS BASICALLY TO GET THE TWO LEADERS BETTER ACQUAINTED. THEY DISCUSSED THE DELAY IN THE ORESUND PROJECT (COPENHAGEN 3470), THE LIGHTWEIGHT FIGHTER PLANE COMPETITION, AND THEIR RECENT TRAVELS (HARTLING TO CHINA, PALME TO NORTH AFRICA AND GERMANY). PALME WILL RETURN TO COPENHAGEN DECEMBER 21 FOR A MEETING OF THE NORDIC SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC LEADERS. END SUMMARY.

1. SWEDISH AMBASSADOR DE BESCHE TOLD CHARGE THAT HE
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HAD BEEN TRYING FOR SOME TIME TO ARRANGE A MEETING BE-

TWEEN PRIME MINISTERS PALME AND HARTLING. THE MEN DID NOT KNOW EACH OTHER WELL, WERE OF DIFFERENT GENERATIONS AND FROM DIFFERENT POLITICAL PARTIES. EARLIER ATTEMPTS AT A MEETING HAD PROVED ABORTIVE BUT IT HAD FINALLY BEEN AGREED THAT PALME WOULD COME TO COPENHAGEN FOR A FEW HOURS THE AFTERNOON OF DECEMBER 6. HE WAS MET AT THE AIRPORT BY HARTLING AT NOON THAT DAY AND DRIVEN TO THE PRIME MINISTERS OFFICIAL RESIDENCE IN A COPENHAGEN SUBURB. THERE THE TWO MINISTERS MET ALONE OVER LUNCH, A CONDITION WHICH DE BESCHE SAID HE HAD STRONGLY URGED IN ORDER THAT THEY TALK FREELY. FROM THEIR SUBSEQUENT PRESS CONFERENCE AND FROM REMARKS HE HAD GLEANED WHILE DRIVING WITH PALME TO THE SUBSEQUENT MEETING WITH JORGENSEN, DE BESCHE SAID HE BELIEVED THE SUBJECTS WHICH HAD OCCUPIED MOST OF THEIR ATTENTION HAD BEEN THE ORESUND PROJECT AND THE LIGHTWEIGHT FIGHTER.

2. BECAUSE THE HARTLING GOVERNMENT HAS CALLED AN ELECTION IN JANUARY, THE COMPLEX ORESUND PROJECT (TWO BRIDGES, A TUNNEL, AND AN AIRPORT), WHICH DENMARK HAD PROMISED TO MAKE A DECISION ON BEFORE THE END OF 1974, HAD AGAIN BEEN POSTPONED. PALME HAD AGREED TO HARTLING'S REQUEST FOR A DELAY IN RATIFICATION OF THE PROJECT, BUT HAD EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT THE NEXT DANISH PARLIAMENT WOULD TAKE UP THE MATTER EXPEDITIOUSLY. HE HAD, HOWEVER, SAID IN RESPONSE TO A NEWSMAN'S QUESTION THAT THERE COULD BE "NO FURTHER DELAYS, SINCE THE MATTER HAD BEEN UNDER DEBATE FOR 25 YEARS".

3. WITH REGARD TO THE FIGHTER PLANE, PALME HAD SAID THAT SWEDISH NEUTRALITY POLICY WOULD CAUSE NO SUPPLY PROBLEMS IN CASE OF WAR. (DE BESCHE EXPLAINED THAT SINCE SWEDEN WAS WILLING TO LICENSE THE PRODUCTION OF THE VIGGEN ABROAD, THE PARTS FOR THE PLANE WOULD COME FROM OTHER COUNTRIES AS WELL AS FROM SWEDEN; THERE COULD BE SUPPLY DIFFICULTIES FROM ANY SOURCE IN AN EMERGENCY, OR PROBLEMS WITH GETTING SUPPLIES, AS HE PUT IT, FROM AREAS WHERE THERE ARE "POLITICAL DIFFICULTIES".) IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION AT THEIR BRIEF PRESS CONFERENCE, HARTLING HAD PLAYED DOWN THE URGENCY OF THE PLANE DECISION (COPENHAGEN 3468).

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4. AFTER HIS LUNCHEON WITH HARTLING, PALME MET ALONE FOR A HALF HOUR WITH JORGENSEN. THEIR TALK, IT IS UNDERSTOOD, WAS PRIMARILY DEVOTED TO A DISCUSSION OF THE MEETING TO BE HELD DECEMBER 21 IN COPENHAGEN AMONG THE NORDIC SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC LEADERS AND THE CHAIRMEN OF THE NORDIC TRADE UNIONS. PALME WILL ATTEND THAT MEETING. JORGENSEN DID TELL THE PRESS AFTER HIS TALK WITH PALME THAT THEY HAD ALSO HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS A JOINT ATTITUDE IN REGARD TO

THE PORTUGUESE SOCIALIST PARTY AND A JOINT NORDIC ENERGY POLICY, BUT HE GAVE NO DETAILS OF THESE DISCUSSIONS.

5. IN A SUBSEQUENT CONVERSATION, HENNING GOTTLIEB, FOREIGN POLICY ADVISOR TO HARTLING, CONFIRMED TO THE POLCOUNS THE ESSENTIALS OF THE ABOVE REPORT AND ADDED THAT HE BELIEVED THE PERSONAL RAPPORT ESTABLISHED IN THE MEETING BETWEEN THE TWO PRIME MINISTERS WAS SATISFACTORY. HE WENT ON TO REGRET WHAT HE SAW AS THE DECLINE IN NORDIC COOPERATION IN RECENT YEARS, A DECLINE HE ATTRIBUTED PRIMARILY TO THE TENDENCY OF THE SWEDES TO LEAN FARTHER LEFT IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, THUS TILTING THE "NORDIC BALANCE". COMMENT: HOW MUCH GOTTLIEB REFLECTS HARTLING'S OWN VIEWS IS DIFFICULT TO SAY, BUT WHAT HE SAID DOES SEEM TO BE IN LINE WITH WHAT WE KNOW OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S SLIGHTLY CONSERVATIVE OUTLOOK ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRIME MINISTER, MILITARY ASSISTANCE, AIRCRAFT, VISITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 13 DEC 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: kelleyw0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974COPENH03508
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740363-0084
From: COPENHAGEN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741238/aaaabfzv.tel
Line Count: 132
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 74 COPENHAGEN 3470, 74 AND 3468
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: kelleyw0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 17 APR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <17 APR 2002 by martinml>; APPROVED <24-Sep-2002 by kelleyw0>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SWEDISH PRIME MINISTER VISITS COPENHAGEN
TAGS: PFOR, DA, SW, XZ, (PALME)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005